

# FEMA Selects Two Oregon Teens for Region 10 Youth Preparedness Council

---

**Release Date: August 29, 2018**

BOTHELL, Wash. – Two teens from Oregon have been selected to be part of the inaugural Region 10 Youth Preparedness Council (YPC), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Oregon Office of Emergency Management (OEM) announced Wednesday. The YPC currently has nine members representing the four states of FEMA Region 10 – Oregon, Alaska, Washington and Idaho.

The 2018 FEMA Region 10 selectees from Oregon are Shruthi Ananth of Portland and Gokul Sriviva.

Two youth lean over a table as they create a poster to encourage preparedness.

FEMA created the National YPC in 2012 to bring together young leaders from across the nation who are interested in supporting and promoting disaster preparedness in their communities. By developing and implementing disaster preparedness projects to fit their communities' needs, YPC members help build a culture of preparedness and develop habits early. Each year, young people in grades 8-11 apply to be part of FEMA's National YPC. This year marks the kickoff of Region 10's council, coinciding with FEMA's National Preparedness Month (September) and Back to School safety campaigns throughout the Region.

“In order for communities to become more resilient in responding and recovering from emergencies and disasters, we must find opportunities to build local capacity and a more inclusive culture of preparedness across the region, starting with empowering youth to lead amongst their peers, neighborhoods and networks,” said FEMA Region 10 Federal Preparedness Coordinator Scott Zaffram. “I am excited at the prospect of these brilliant youth being invited to the table,



representing their states, and working side-by-side with emergency management officials, elected officials, and citizens in finding the best approach at motivating people to take action and to actively prepare for rainy days.”

Region 10 selected the nine members based on their dedication to public service, community involvement and potential to expand the impact of youth preparedness in their community. Members of the Region 10 YPC will give a voice to the young people who could be impacted by disasters in the region.

The remaining 2018 FEMA Region 10 selectees are:

- Gabrielle Karber of Vancouver, Washington
- Teagan Grabish of Blaine, Washington
- Ritusha Samal of Redmond, Washington
- DevRee-Jayden “DJ” Rapp of Meridian, Idaho
- Amber Blake of Meridian, Idaho
- Taya Warren of Sitka, Alaska
- Blake Rogers of Big Lake, Alaska

“We are proud to recognize these young leaders for their dedication to service and commitment to helping communities become more prepared for emergencies,” OEM Director Andrew Phelps said. “As advocates, council members are able to engage their peers across the region in fostering a true culture of preparedness.”

Ananth led the robotics team that developed a prototype for an earthquake early warning system for the bridges around Portland. She also represents more than 10,000 students in her school district by serving as a student member on the Beaverton School Health Board, focused on youth preparedness across Oregon. Srinivasan has supported community outreach efforts and strengthening community connections with local businesses. He looks forward to interacting with the communities around Region 10 and helping to share input and ideas about



**FEMA**

Page 2 of 3

disaster preparedness with community members and policymakers.

“I’m impressed with the knowledge and energy that these young adults bring to the FEMA Region 10 YPC and we are proud to work alongside them,” Zaffram said. “Additionally, we are pleased to announce that two National YPC representatives from Washington, Lathan Chatfield and Nicole Muñoz-Casaldue, will serve as mentors to our newly appointed council members.”

The council reflects FEMA’s commitment to involve America’s youth in preparedness-related activities. It also provides an avenue to engage young people by taking into account their perspectives, feedback and opinions. Council members will meet with FEMA Region 10 and OEM staff throughout their term to provide input on strategies, initiatives and projects.

Council members participated in the recent inaugural Region 10 YPC meeting at the FEMA office in Bothell. The meeting gave members the opportunity to share their preparedness ideas with state and federal partners, plan their culmination project and meet with FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness staff who will serve as their mentors.

###

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

